



RESILIENCY

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DOES SOCIALIZING MAKE US SMARTER ?

Syd Davidson; INNG Director of Psychological Health

According to a series of studies at the University of Michigan, it does! "This study shows that simply talking to other people, the way you do when you're making friends, can provide mental benefits," said psychologist Oscar Ybarra, a researcher at the U-M Institute for Social Research (ISR).

Studies showed that people who engage in conversations and getting to know others, got a "mental

boost" in their ability to problem solve and overall intellectual functioning. These conversations required the use of memory, self-monitoring, and the ability to suppress external and internal distractions. "We believe that performance boosts come about because some social interactions induce people to try to read others' minds and take their perspectives on things," Ybarra said.

"And we also find that when we structure even competitive interactions to have an element of taking the other person's perspective, or trying to put yourself in the other person's shoes, there is a boost in executive functioning as a result."

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A Natural High That Is Good For You & Legal

Did you ever wonder why certain activities make you feel better; exercising, laughing, sex, etc?

It is the same mechanism in your brain that results in a “runner’s high.”

Endorphins are neurotransmitters that the brain produces to reduce pain. They have been known to produce feelings of euphoria and are often referred to as a “natural opiate.”

Endorphins are natural hormones that are stored in the pituitary glands. When you are in a lot of pain, engage in vigorous exercise, or various other activities, our brain releases these “feel good” hormones throughout our body.



Some say knowledge is power, and now you will become more powerful by learning some quick and easy ways to boost your endorphins, and feel better. Below you will find some suggestions from Alan Hirsch, MD from the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation in Chicago.

1. **Eat a chili pepper.** “Chewing a hot pepper can release endorphins centrally and on the tongue.” Why? To reduce pain.
2. **Think positive thoughts.** According to Joel Furman, MD (author of Eat for Health and Eat to Live) “when people take a placebo, it often works.” The reason behind this is the power of positive thinking. Endorphins are actually released to ease the pain, even if the medication given is ineffective.
3. **Work out.** People that jog regularly often refer to a “runner’s high.” This happens after they reach a certain point in their work out. The brain senses pain and exertion and releases endorphins to make the body feel better. In fact, athletes often describe going through withdrawal if they go for a period of time when they do not exercise.
4. **Laugh.** This has to be true laughter; not forced. The deeper you laugh, the better you feel.
5. **Have an orgasm.** Yes, you read it correctly. It is a great way to get a rush of endorphins and takes a lot less effort than running a mile!

Let Your Fingers Do The Walking To: www.afterdeployment.org

After Deployment.org is a website that is interactive, informative, and a great resource. It will help you and your family put into perspective what are normal reactions vs. ones that would benefit from professional help. There is Information regarding relationship issues, substance abuse, anger, spirituality, PTSD, stigma, sleep problems, mTBI, etc.

If you want to know some common reactions to coming home, look it up. Not only is this site informative, it allows you to take confidential assessments as well as providing on line workshops to help you address some mild issues you may have (families included). First, you must remember one thing. You are not superman or superwoman. Hence, you can not solve all of your problems alone. Take your first step by acknowledging there may be a problem. Take your second step to learn more about it and your third step to actually get some help.

Resiliency is developed through the use of our “good” coping skills. Why not take advantage of a site that helps promote the use of those skills; while teaching you new ones? You have nothing to loose, and everything to gain!

DoD Looks At Using Smart Phones To Help With Behavioral Health Therapy, And Also In The Combat Zone

How many times have you drawn a blank when the doctor or therapist asks you “how long have you been feeling this way?”

According to [Gould](#) and [Hoffman](#) from [Army Times](#) there is a free application called the T2 Mood Tracker that allows users to keep a record of their feelings and thoughts all in one place. Using self-monitoring to track and review their emotional experience over a period of days, weeks and months has been proven to be a very effective tool in therapy. Research suggests that self-monitoring often has a therapeutic value by keeping people focused on the issue they are monitoring.

“How have things been going since I last saw you?” With this application it’s easy to answer that question, because you will have it all documented. You will be able to share how you felt during different days and different circumstances. The T2 Mood tracker will put this data into graphs enabling you and your

doctor or therapist to see what, if any, correlations exist. This is especially helpful for people who have some difficulty with their short term memory. Your feelings, thoughts, and activities will all be recorded at the time you are experiencing them. This is also a great way to keep track of when you started or stopped a medication or any side effects you may be experiencing. You could also keep track of work related issues. We all know that work can effect our moods and general wellbeing.



HTC Aria™

deployment like post-traumatic stress, brain injury, life stress, depression and anxiety.

Users can monitor their own emotional experiences associated with common behavioral health issues related to

This application can be tailored to meet the unique needs of the individual by offering additional rating scales. With each self-rating, notes on the circumstances regarding the emotional experiences can be added. Self-monitoring results can be a self-help tool or could be shared with a therapist or health care professional to provide a record of the individual’s emotional experience over a specific period of time.

To learn more about this Google: “DoD; T2 mood tracker” or look at the Dec 14th issue of [Army Times](#).

The February issue of [Resiliency](#) will discuss the use of Smart Phones in combat. If you want to get a head start on this topic, look up the program called “Connecting Soldiers to Digital Applications.” This is already underway at Fort Bliss, and is in testing for the war zone.

You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself any direction you choose.

You're on your own. And you know what you know.

And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go....

—Dr. Seuss, Oh! The Places You'll Go!

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

We talk a lot about physical fitness and put great emphasis on this. I would like to take a moment and talk about spiritual fitness. Just as there is no one definition for Resiliency there is no one definition for Spirituality.

Before we start, I want to make a distinction between religion and spirituality. For some, they may be the same, however for many they are two separate entities... Some have described a spiritual connection as finding meaning and purpose in your life, discovering who you truly are and connecting with the sources that provide you inner strength, comfort, hope and inner peace.

Spiritual health is an important part of an individual's overall well being. From a holistic point of view, spiritual health as well as physical and mental health are all intertwined. Each area affects the other(s). An example could be someone who is sad or depressed. They often suffer from sleep disturbance, have problems concentrating, making decisions, or they may be feeling helpless or hopeless. Muscle aches and pains or physical ailments seem worse, and the person often withdraws from their family and friends. **This can happen to anyone.** The difference between the spiritual person and non spiritual person may be how they see the future.



Often the person who does not have some form of spirituality may feel lost, as if they have no purpose. They may feel as if there is no one to reach out to. On the other hand, the spiritual person may have some of the same feelings however they have a "rope to hang on to." They have someone, something, a belief, etc that they can turn to and get some relief from their pain. Deep inside they find an inner strength to push forward, to get help, to deal with the source of their pain whether it is physical or emotional.

Take a moment to reflect. What gives you inner peace, strength, comfort? What do you believe in? How do you feel connected to others? There are many different spiritual paths; you must find what works best for you. For some meditation, yoga, gardening, worship, volunteering, etc are means to finding inner peace.

Spirituality is a process. Regardless of your beliefs you can always improve your spiritual, mental and physical health by cultivating more humor and gratitude in to your life.

Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace and gratitude.

- Denis Waitley

USE IT OR LOOSE IT

Just think of all of the different connotations that has! **Think**, that is the key word! It is not inevitable that you will loose your memory or other cognitive functions as you get older. However studies have shown that people who exercise their brain, as well as their body are less likely to experience deterioration in brain functioning.

This is an exercise that can strengthen neural connections and even create new ones.

Switch the hand you are using to control the computer mouse.

Use the hand you normally do NOT use.

What do you notice?

Is it harder to be precise and accurate with your motions

Do you feel like you did when you were first learning to

tie your shoelaces?

If you are feeling uncomfortable and awkward don't worry, your brain is learning a new skill.

Try other neural building and strengthening exercises with everyday movements. Use your opposite hand to brush your teeth, dial the phone or operate the TV remote.

Improve Your Self Confidence

So much of our ability to take on challenges, deal with adversity, and facing the unknown rests on how we feel about ourselves. What can you do if you don't feel good about yourself? Remember, confidence is about 90% mental! Here are some easy things you can do to increase your self confidence and change the state of your mind.

Be Pro Active instead of Re Active: You take control of your life and decide to be more assertive. By empowering yourself you start the journey upward towards positive thinking. Write out your goals, fears, hopes and dreams. Don't just think about them. Putting them on paper makes them real. Look at what you have control of (have influence over) and what you do not. Put a plan together to act on what you have control over. You also must realize if you have no influence over things, it is out of your control. There is nothing you can do, other than waste your time worrying about it. Isn't your time more valuable than that?

Exercise: Remember those endorphins? The feel good hormones our brain produces. Get them working for you! Exercising will

help you sleep and even help you think more positively! While doing this, change your thinking to a have a more positive slant. Instead of "I wish I wasn't so tired," switch to "Exercising will give me energy."

Reprogram Your Mind To Be confident:

There are self affirmations books at all of the bookstores; many of which are tailored to your personality! Go to a hypnotist, Listen to self -help tapes on your MP3, iPod, etc. to reprogram yourself conscious to be positive. This will change the way you think about yourself and soon it will be automatic.

With the exception of the hypnotist , these are all free or non expensive ways to boost your confidence!

**** Military One Source offers free self help, relaxation, motivational tapes that come with their own earphones and you don't even need to have a iPod or MP3 player to listen to them. Plus they are FREE!!**
www.militaryonesource

Resiliency is a newsletter for service members and their families. Feedback is welcomed and encouraged. If there are subjects, concerns, or questions you have about issues dealing with mental wellness, please let me know.

—Syd Davidson (sydney.davidson@us.army.mil)

RESOURCES

National Crisis and Suicide Hotline	1-800-273-TALK (8255)
National VA Hotline	1-800-273-8255
Military One Source	1-800-342.9647
Joint Operations Center	1-800-237-2850
Joint Services Support	www.jointservicessupport.org
Find Treatment; Substance Abuse and Mental Health	http://dasis3.samhsa.gov
Mental Health Association Indiana	www.mhai.net
Recovery Indiana	www.recoveryindiana.org
USA Cares	http://usacares.org
U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine	http://phc.amedd.army.mil (CHIPPM)
Military One Source	www.militaryonesource.com
Air Force Crossroads	http://www.afcrossroads.com
Army Times	http://www.armytimes.com
Military Times	www.militarytimes.com
Real Warriors	www.realwarriors.net
War Fighter Diaries	http://www.warfighterdiaries.com
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America	http://iava.org/
Center for Deployment Psychology	http://deploymentpsych.net
Defense Centers of Excellence	http://www.dcoe.health.mil
After Deployment.org	http://www.afterdeployment.org

**PSYCHOLOGICAL
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The mission of the National Guard Psychological Health Program is to advocate, promote, and guide National Guard members and their families by supporting psychological fitness for operational readiness. For contact information regarding the Director of Psychological Health (Syd Davidson; 317-247-3300 x 85480), go to: www.jointservicessupport.org.